NEWSDAY 1-31

ADV FOR 6:30 A.M. EDT SUN 2-1

NEW YORK (UPI) -- FBI INFORMANTS WERE ACTIVE IN THE 1968 RIOTS THAT BROUGHT MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., BACK TO MEMPHIS, TENN., WHERE HE WAS ASSASSINATED, NEWSDAY SAID TODAY.

THE LONG ISLAND NEWSPAPER QUOTED TWO UNDISCLOSED SOURCES AS SAYING SEVERAL FBI AGENTS AND AT LEAST ONE MEMPHIS POLICE OFFICER PENETRATED THE BLACK MILITANT GROUP KNOW AS THE "INVADERS" -- A 100-MEMBER FACTION IN THE VANGUARD OF RIOTING ON MARCH 28, 1968, IN OPPOSITION TO KING'S POLICY OF NON-VIOLENT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. ONE YOUTH WAS KILLED, SCORES WERE INJURED AND 280 PERSONS WERE ARRESTED BEFORE THE MELEE WAS QUELLED.

NEWSDAY QUOTED THE REV. JESSE JACKSON, ONE OF KING'S AIDES AT THE TIME OF INCIDENT, AS SAYING KING NEVER WOULD HAVE RETURNED TO MEMPHIS FOLLOWING HIS ABORTED ATTEMPT TO LEAD A PEACEFUL MARCH ON BEHALF OF THE CITY'S SANITATION WORKERS HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR THE INVADER-LED DISTURBANCE.

"WE NEVER INTENDED TO GET BOGGED DOWN IN MEMPHIS," HE SAID.

NEWSDAY SAID A FORMER LEADER OF THE INVADERS TOLD ONE OF ITS REPORTERS HE LATER LEARNED THE TRUE IDENTITY OF THE POLICE OFFICER WHO WORKED UNDERCOVER, POSING AS A MEMBER OF THE GROUP.

"HE HAD A 7.62 RUSSIAN AUTOMATIC RIFLE AND HE WAS ARMED EVERY TIME WE WERE ARMED," THE FORMER GANG-LEADER WAS QUOTED AS SAYING. "HE WAS ALWAYS SUGGESTING ACTIONS THAT WE SHOULD TAKE. I NEVER SAW HIM PHYSICALLY ATTACK ANYONE, BUT HE WAS ONE OF THE MOST PROVOCATIVE MEMBERS OF THE INVADERS."

NEWSDAY SAID BOTH THE FBI AND MEMPHIS POLICE HAVE VERIFIED THAT THEIR AGENTS WERE WORKING WITHIN THE INVADER ORGANIZATION AT THE TIME OF THE RIOTS AND KING'S ASSASSINATION.

THE NEWSPAPER QUOTED THE REV. ROSEA WILLIAMS, ATLANTA DIRECTOR OF THE SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE FOUNDED BY KING, AS SAYING THE SCLC FREQUENTLY USED INVADER GANG MEMBERS AS PARADE MARSHALS OR SECURITY GUARDS.

"THEY WOULD NEVER HAVE HURT DR. KING," WILLIAMS WAS QUOTED AS SAYING. "BUT THOSE WHO INFILTRATED OUR GROUPS, AND WE COULD NEVER IDENTIFY THEM, TRIED TO EXPLOIT THE YOUNGSTERS' FRUSTRATIONS AND NEGLECT AND TURN THEM AGAINST US."

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